

■ Remarks for Special Issue on ITS

On behalf of NEC, I would like to first express our appreciation for your continued support of NEC products and solutions.

In 1996, Japan's ITS entered full-scale development with the unveiling of the Comprehensive Plan for "ITS (Intelligent Transport Systems) in Japan" by 5 government bodies (National Police Agency, Ministry of International Trade and Industry, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, and the Ministry of Construction) based on expectations that this system would alleviate various road and traffic problems such as accidents and congestion, stimulate the creation of new industries, and lead the way to the establishment of the advanced Information & Communications Society of tomorrow. Since that time, we have witnessed the nationwide deployment of VICS and ETC with the cumulative total number of vehicles equipped with car navigation system with VICS functionality and ETC terminals reaching 20 million respectively. It is clear that ITS has already achieved a certain level of impact. Through the future linking and integration of each system, even more progress is expected in the second stage of ITS development.

For the second stage of ITS development, a policy framework and the following 3 objectives were set forth at the Japan ITS Promotion Conference in October 2004. With the collaboration of the private sector, public sector and academia, Japan is tackling the realization of...

- 1) Safer and more secure society ("Zero traffic fatality" Society);
- 2) Eco-friendly, efficient society ("Zero congestion" Society); and
- 3) High-convenience, high-comfort society ("Zero transportation stress" Society).

Among these goals, the Cabinet Secretariat announced the New IT Reform Strategy in January 2006, and resolved to make the world's safest road transport society and achieve a reduction of annual traffic-related fatalities to under 5,000 by the year 2012 through promotion of ITS.

In addition, global warming due to automobile emissions has risen to the level of a major social issue, and under the Kyoto Protocol, Japan has targeted a reduction of annual CO₂ emissions generated by the transportation sector to a level of 250 million tons by the year 2010. With a need to reduce 54.9 million tons from

current levels in order to achieve this goal, transportation sector holds high expectations for the benefits of ITS.

We have also seen widespread usage of the Internet through personal computers and the rapid and general adoption of mobile phones. Both have become indispensable in daily life. In addition, mobile phones as a means to access the Internet are overtaking personal computers, pointing to the shift from the era of PC-centric Internet access to the age of “Ubiquitous Networks” in which everything is connected to the Internet. The automobile is not an exception. Already over one million vehicles are currently connected to the network and are receiving Telematics services provided by major automobile manufacturers.

NEC possesses not only sensors, communications, information processing and other core technologies for ITS but also the capability to optimally integrate the entire system. With this enormous potential as the background, NEC is tackling the development of social systems serving as a platform for ITS such as ETC and VICS, as well as various core technologies for the car including devices to facilitate communications between the road and vehicle and between vehicles.

In this special issue, we would like to introduce our approach to solutions that are enhancing the safety, security, environment and convenience of ITS, and the various core technologies that make these advances possible. We hope that you will continue to provide us with your valuable support and encouragement as we endeavor to bring new innovation into your life.



ITO Akira

Associate Senior Vice President